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Ellison Memorial

Memorial

James Ellison

1778–1820

Compiled by his grand-daughter
Mrs. Mary H. Ellison Curran

1903

James Ellison

Nov. 22. 1813.

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PREFACE.

SOME of the following records are taken from the Bible of William and Mary (Bishop) Ellison (now in the family of Judge Parmenter of Arlington, Mass.), and some from the Bible of my grandfather, James Ellison. The newspaper clipping, containing the obituary notice, was preserved by the father of Judge Parmenter and a copy of the newspaper has been found in the collection of the American Antiquarian Society, Worcester, Mass. The poems of James Ellison were owned by his son James Ellison of Waltham, and given by him to a sister of the writer.

M. H. CURRAN.

BANGOR, Dec. 14, 1903.

OBITUARY NOTICE.

On Sunday last, were entombed in this town, the remains of MRS. CHARLOTTE ELLISON, aged 41, and within a few weeks, four individuals of the same family, have been consigned to the mansions of Death.

MISS ELIZABETH ELLISON, aged 17, died on the 27th Oct.—MR. JAMES ELLISON, aged 42, died on the 30th Oct.—MISS MARY B. ELLISON, aged 12, died on the 1st Nov., all of the same disease, a violent fever, leaving at the same time four other children sick, who have but now barely recovered.

That a tributary notice should have been omitted at the decease of the different individuals of this estimable family, may be accounted for, by the circumstance that the distressing events imparted too great a gloom to permit, at that time, the influence of those feelings which occasion notices of this kind. It is when the event is of common occurrence that the prompt effusion of friendship appears—but when so overwhelming a storm of trouble bursts upon the happiness of a family—and when grief for the dead, and strong anxiety for the living, are both agitating the mind—the feelings are too powerful to be indulged, and we are more desirous to repress their ardour than exhibit their impressions.

Mr. James Ellison was a gentleman well known in this town, as possessing an amiable disposition — and very considerable literary acquirements, the different effusions of his mind have been exhibited to the public; and those acquainted with the author have always given them a reputation highly honorable to him as a writer and a man. His character as husband, son, and father, was unexceptionable.

Mrs. Ellison was a lady most perfectly qualified to render the domestic state pleasant and happy; with a steady and kind hand she brought up her children, and their behavior and deportment fully shews her competency to that important task. Friendly, social, and charitable, she enjoyed the confidence and attachment of all who knew her. Relying on the support of Religion, she had borne with a great degree of fortitude her repeated bereavements — but human nature, unless divested of sensibility, could not wholly withstand the heart-rending agony of witnessing the loss of an endeared companion and her lovely children. Her distresses probably, in some degree, gave force to the malady which deprived her of life.

Miss Elizabeth Ellison had just entered that period of life which is the most interesting and important as it respects her character and prospects through life, and this presented a most cheering view; she felt the force of parental obligation; she was always sensible of the duty of moral and social requirements; piety ever had its influence on her senses, and the softer feelings of affection for her younger brothers and sisters were always conspicuous in her conduct.

Miss Mary B. Ellison had not attained the age at which the character is formed; but her promise was no less encouraging than that of her older sister—and she expired equally beloved by her numerous relatives and friends.

Four young and helpless orphans are spared to bear and remember the tale of this sweeping desolation, and an aged mother, who has long rested on the affection of a daughter, although favored with the blessing of Providence in worldly comforts, feels that string broken which was one of her strongest ties to the world.

The almost unprecedented dispensation of Providence toward this family, has created in the community a general and powerful impression—for where is the parent who sees around him the companion of his fortune, and a group of lovely children, who does not feel powerfully affected at the idea that in a few weeks the destroying angel may blast his happiness and render tenantless the mansion of domestic peace and comfort.

From "The Boston Intelligencer and Evening Gazette," of Saturday Evening Dec. 23. 1820. William W. Clapp Editor and Proprietor.

ELLISON FAMILY.

Nothing is known about the family previous to their settling in this country, save that they came from London near Threadneedle Street.

JOSEPH ELLISON, the first of the family of whom we have any record, was born in England in 1695, and died in Boston Sept. 20, 1771. He was in Boston in 1768. As no record can be found of the death of his wife, it is probable that she died before he came to this country. He had two children, both of whom came to Boston, Mass.

1. ELIZABETH ELLISON, b. 1734, d. in Boston, March 8, 1801.
2. WILLIAM ELLISON, b. Oct. 1, 1741, d. in Boston of consumption, May 15, 1816. He married, 1762, Mary, daughter of James and Sarah (Snow) Bishop, of Dorchester, Mass. She was b. April 25, 1740, d. in Boston, of dropsy, Feb. 23, 1817. Both were buried in the family tomb of Parmenter and Ellison, 91 Central Ground (now part of Boston Common.)

Children of William and Mary (Bishop) Ellison:

1. MARY, b. Dec. 3, 1762, d. June 10, 1807; m. Ezra Parmenter of Boston, Oct. 20, 1780. He d. Aug. 14, 1808.
2. ELIZABETH, b. Jan. 4, or 11, 1766, d. Sept. 12, 1767.
3. ELIZABETH, b. May 10, 1768, d. March 14, 1850; m. Daniel Bates, of Quincy, Mass., Nov. 15, 1787. He d. June 5, 1812.

4. WILLIAM, b. Feb. 17, 1772, d. Dec. 24, 1820.
   m. 1st, Mary Jackson, June 15, 1794. She d. Sept. 4, 1807.
   2d, Sarah Whitmarsh, Nov. 4, 1810. She d. March 23, 1822.
5. JAMES, b. Jan. 17, 1778, d. Oct. 30, 1820; m. Charlotte, daughter of William and Elizabeth (Hodson) Hickling, Dec. 12, 1802.
6. SAMUEL, b. Aug. 1, 1781, d. of consumption, April 11, 1846.
   m. 1st, Elizabeth Shedd, Aug. 26, 1804. She d. June 22, 1806.
   2d, Bethiah Hearsey, of Hingham, Aug. 22, 1808. She was b. Aug. 22, 1785, d. Nov. 4, 1862.

JAMES ELLISON.

JAMES, son of William and Mary (Bishop) Ellison, b. in Boston Jan. 17, 1778, d. in Boston of malarial typhus fever Oct. 30, 1820. He married, Dec. 12, 1802, Charlotte, daughter of William and Elizabeth (Hodson) Hickling. She was descended from prominent people in Massachusetts; e. g., Elder Thomas Leverett, Dr. Isaac Addington, Hon. Penn Townsend, John Sale, Hopestill Foster, etc. Her grandfather, William Hickling, b. Sutton Bonnington, Nottinghamshire, Eng., 1704, d. Boston, Mass., after 1773, m. Sarah, daughter of John Sale, 1734; William Hickling,[2] b. Boston May 21, 1742, d. June 2, 1790, m. Elizabeth, daughter of Thomas and Mary (Lee) Hodson, Boston, 1764. He took part in the American Revolution, as the Revolutionary Rolls of Massachusetts show: —

HICKLING, WILLIAM, Boston. Paymaster, Col. Brooks's regt.; Continental Army pay accounts for service from Jan. 1, 1777 to Oct. 1, 1778; reported a Supernumerary Oct. 1, 1778; *also*, certificate dated Boston, Jan. 20, 1779, signed by Maj. Daniel Whiting, certifying that said Hickling, Paymaster, Col. Ichabod Alden's regt., joined at camp at Stillwater before Aug. 15, 1777, and was not absent except on command until Oct. 1, 1778, when he was returned a Supernumerary under the new arrangement in said regiment; reported commissioned Jan. 1, 1777; residence, Boston.

Gunner, in a company commanded by Maj. Gen. Hancock, raised for defence of the Castle and Fort on Governor's Island,

Boston Harbor; commissioned March 17, 1780; *also*, Gunner, Capt. Lieut. William Burbeck's Co.; enlisted March 17, 1780; service to Oct. 24, 1781, 19 mos. 9 days; company raised for defence of Castle and Governor's Islands and commanded by His Excellency John Hancock; *also* Capt. Thomas Cushing's Co.; service from Oct. 25, 1781, to Oct. 24, 1784, 36 mos.; company raised for defence of Castle and Governor's Islands; rolls sworn to at Boston; *also*, same Co.; service between Oct. 25, 1784, and Jan. 24, 1785, 18 days; company raised for defence of Castle and Governor's Islands; roll sworn to at Boston.

One of his descendants has the following

CERTIFICATE FROM MAJ. DANIEL WHITING.

"I certify that Capt. William Hickling did lay out and superinteod a Fort erected at Cherry Valley in the Mohawk County by the Name of Fort Alden and had the Command & Direction of the Cannon, and Recommend him for his brave behavior in the attack made by the Indians on the 11th Nov. 1778.

Boston 20th Feby. 1780.

DAN'L WHITING, Maj. Com.

Charlotte, daughter of William and Elizabeth (Hodson) Hickling, b. Jan. 2, 1780, d. Dec. 16, 1820, m. James Ellison Dec. 12, 1802. He was cashier of Boston Bank and lived on South Street.

Children of James and Charlotte (Hickling) Ellison:

1. ELIZABETH HICKLING, b. Sept. 24, 1803, d. Oct. 27, 1820, of malarial typhus fever.
2. JAMES, b. July 2, 1805, d. Aug. 10, 1805.
3. JAMES, b. Sept. 14, 1806, d. in Waltham, Mass., Dec. 1, 1880; m. Mary Smith Harris, Jan. 27, 1833. She d. Dec. 5, 1880—both deaths were from pneumonia.
4. MARY BISHOP, b. Aug. 4, 1808, d. Nov. 1, 1820 of malarial typhus fever.

5. WILLIAM, b. Aug. 13, 1811, d. in Duxbury, Mass., Jan. 31, 1858; m. Almeda Partridge, of Duxbury, Feb. 9, 1834. She was b. Jan. 15, 1815, d. Oct. 27, 1902.
6. EDWARD,* b. Oct. 16, 1813, d. in Bangor, Me., Feb. 23, 1866, of bronchial consumption; m. Mrs. Lucy Garland (Mills) Milliken, Jan. 13, 1839. Lived in Bangor. She was b. in Cape Elizabeth, Me., March 11, 1810, d. of bronchial pneumonia, March 31, 1887.
7. CHARLES, b. Dec. 13, 1815, d. of lung fever, Dec. 16, 1816.
8. MARTHA BRADFORD, b. Sept. 20, 1817, d. of dropsy in the head, Sept. 21, 1818.
9. SARAH RIPLEY, b. Aug. 7, 1819.

*The following notice appeared in the Bangor Daily Whig and Courier, Feb. 24, 1866:

"The death of Mr. Edward Ellison, chronicled in our paper this morning, casts a sad gloom over the community. Mr. Ellison has, for some years past, been one of the Overseers of the Poor of our city, and in his official position, as well as in private life, had endeared himself to the hearts of all with whom he was connected. In a quiet, unobtrusive manner he was the minister of aid to many of the unfortunate in our midst, besides drawing largely from his own private purse for charitable purposes. His genial disposition, and warm, true heart will ever be fresh in the memories of his friends and associates."

The Board of Overseers, in noticing the death of Edward Ellison, said:

"He has been a very efficient member of the Board of Overseers for the last nine years. In his death the community has lost an honest man and an upright citizen, and this Board a prompt and agreeable associate. Mr. Ellison was known, respected, and honured by us all for his high character and moral worth. We all unite in the above tribute to his memory."

1 James Ellison, 1806—1880.

2 William Ellison, 1811—1858.

3 Edward Ellison, 1813—1866.

4 Sarah Ripley Ellison, 1819—

JAMES ELLISON AS AN AUTHOR.

JAMES ELLISON, 1778—1820, was a dramatic critic and the author of dramatic pieces, poems, etc. In the "Records of the Boston Stage," by Wm. W. Clapp, is the following, pp. 164—165.

In the summer of this year a society, composed of young men, organized the Philo Dramatic Society, and gave occasional entertainments at Amphitheatre, Washington Garden. The primary purposes of the society were improvement in declamation, reading, and recitation, the expenses being defrayed by an annual assessment. No professional actor was permitted to take any part in the performances. Of the origin of this society, John Preston, Esq., gives us the following account:—"The first idea originated with James Ellison, who resided in South Street, and was first book-keeper in the Boston bank at that time. Mr. Ellison did not like to be active in the concern for two reasons; he had a large family, and was connected with a financial institution; but he gave *us* the benefit of his services as a more than clever poet. He was a remarkably strong lover of the drama, and his able criticisms on theatricals can be found in the Boston Gazette of that day, which at that time was partly under the control of John Russell. Mr. Ellison was the author of a number of successful

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dramatic pieces that were all in print at that time.* I, at this moment, recollect only one by its title; it was 'The Siege of Tripoli.' I remember seeing Duff play *Aben Hamet* the principal character in it; of this I am not very certain however. Ellison had drawn this *Aben Hamet* to represent Napoleon as a tyrant. He furnished us almost every night we played with an original prologue or epilogue. He asked me to name the idea of getting up a "Philo Dramatic Society" to Josiah Spurr, Thayer, Charles Kupfer, Whittaker, and probably others that I do not now remember. I did so. They all agreed to be present, provided a meeting of that kind should be called. Kupfer and myself put in the first advertisement, I think in the Evening Gazette, calling that meeting. It was more fully attended than we had expected; but they all wanted to be *paying* members, not *active*. Mr. Ellison was there, but declined taking any office, although he was more potentially influential to the society than all its officers combined."

* The only one of his dramatic pieces now in print that I know of is "The American Captive," published in Boston, 1812.

LINES

on committing the remains of an infant Child to the tomb.

O Death! with what unfeeling hand
  Thou spread'st thy chilling gloom!
Day after day by thy command
  I'm summoned to the tomb
To weep some friend, some kindred dear,
Whom thou hast sent to moulder here.

Father![1] Here rests thy aged head
  Which Time had silver'd o'er:
Thy frame which filial duty led
  My soul to love—adore—
How cold and mute that lifeless tongue,
Where once the kindest accents hung.

Mother![2] here too in awful sleep,
  Thine aged limbs are laid:
And shall I then refuse to weep—
  Still claim the Stoic's aid?
No, Mother! I will weep for thee:
How many tears thou shed'st for me.

Sister![3] and shall my plaintive muse
  Forget that thou art here?
Ah no, thy mouldering form renews
  My agonizing tear.
O Sister! I did love thee well,
And on thy virtues long could dwell.

Lo! there two little cherubs lie,
Some parents' darling joys;
Ah! now I meet their half-clos'd eyes:
They are my lovely Boys![4]
Fond children wake! a Father speaks!
Oh! drive the *lily* from your cheeks.

Alas! they hear not—yet they smile,
And sweetly seem to say,
"*Father! O take us to thy arms*
And bear us far away!"
Sweet *Babes!* fresh griefs his steps pursue,
Another Babe[5] *he brings to you!*

Yes Death! another shaft hath flown
From thy mysterious bow:
Thou heard'st a Mother's tenderest moan;
Yet laid her infant low.
The fairest flower in Flora's store
Thy hand hath touch'd — it blooms no more.

Farewell blest Shades! the busy care
Of life now calls me hence:
My God! O hear my suppliant prayer,
Be *Thou* my soul's defence
When Death shall aim his missive dart
To stop the current of my heart.

O! then on wings of peace and love,
O! may my spirit rise
To join these friends in heaven above—
To meet them in the skies.
Where all is pure unsullied bliss;
One cloudless day of happiness.—

JAMES ELLISON.

1. William Ellison, d. May 15, 1816, aged 74 years.
2. Mary (Bishop) Ellison, d. Feb. 23, 1817, aged 77 years.
3. Mary (Ellison) Parmenter, d. June 10, 1807, aged 45 years.
4. { James Ellison, d. Aug. 10, 1805, aged 1 mo. 8 days.
   { Charles Ellison d. Dec. 16, 1816, aged 1 year, 3 days.
5. Martha Bradford Ellison, d. Sept. 21, 1818, aged 1 year, 1 day.

HYMN OF PRAISE

written for and intended to be sung at the

ORDINATION

OF

MR. F. W. P. GREENWOOD.

"Strike the Cymbal,
Roll the tymbal"
Let your loud hosannas rise,

CHORUS.

Fervent, glowing,
Ever flowing
To the Ruler of the skies.

SOLO.

Purest pleasures,
Heavenly treasures
Circle round His radiant throne.

CHORUS.

Seraphs winging,
Angels singing
Glory be to GOD alone.

SOLO TREBLE.

Swell your voices,
Heaven rejoices
Hark! again th' angelic choir.

SOLO TENOR.

Let the rapturous strains inspire.

CHORUS.

Sweetly thrilling
Love instilling
Gratitude to Israel's Sire.

GOD of Power!
Sorrow's hour
Still its chast'ning gloom imparts:
But thou 'rt sending,
Kindly blending
JOYS to sooth our aching hearts.

SOLO.

Praise Him in these sacred walls:
Here His ceaseless bounty falls:
Mercy sheds its brightest ray:
GOD a Shepherd gives to-day.

JAMES ELLISON.

The above hymn was sung at the ordination of Rev. F. W. P. Greenwood, at New South Church, [Unitarian], Church Green, 1818.